

EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

ROUTING SLIP

TO:

		ACTION	INFO	DATE	INITIAL
1	DCI		X	27 JUN 1985	
2	DDCI		X		
3	EXDIR				
4	D/ICS				
5	DDI		X		
6	DDA				
7	DDO		X		
8	DDS&T				
9	Chm/NIC				
10	GC				
11	IG				
12	Compt				
13	D/OLL				
14	D/PAO				
15	VC/NIC				
16	C/LA/DO		X		
17	NIO/LA		X		
18	D/ALA/DI		X		
19	C/CATF/DO		X		
20					
21					
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SUSPENSE

Date

Remarks

STAT

Executive Secretary

28 Jun 85

Date

3637 (10-81)



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

Executive Registry	
85-	2530

June 11, 1985

MEMORANDUM TO DISTRIBUTION LIST A

FROM: S/LPD - Otto J. Reich *cur for*

SUBJECT: Central American Journalists Talk About Nicaragua

In discussing U.S. policy toward Nicaragua and Nicaragua's internal situation, you may sometimes find it useful to quote Central American journalists. Enclosed are four items that may be helpful in this regard:

- (1) HONDURAN NEWSPAPER COLUMNIST DEFENDS FREEDOM FIGHTERS: Orlando Henriquez, columnist for the Honduran newspaper La Tribuna, defends the Nicaraguan freedom fighters in a column titled "Contras";
- (2) NICARAGUA AND THE FAILURE OF THE MARXIST DREAM: excerpts of an editorial from the February 12 La Nacion, a leading Costa Rican newspaper; titled "The Impossible Revolution," this editorial points out that the increasing political and economic problems faced by Nicaragua are its own fault, in large part for trying to follow the historical blind alley of Marxism;
- (3) "NICARAGUA: A PEOPLE BETRAYED BY EVERYONE," excerpts of an article from the February 14 edition of the Costa Rican newspaper La Republica; this article criticizes the abandonment of the Nicaraguan people by those who should be helping them and notes that, with or without the U.S., many Nicaraguans will continue to fight for their freedom, as they did against Somoza;
- (4) JOURNALISTS' ASSOCIATION SENDS LETTER TO EUROPEAN LEADERS: informal translation of a letter written by the Nicaraguan Journalists' Association (APN) to President Gonzalez of Spain, Prime Minister Thatcher of Great Britain, and President Mitterrand of France; the letter, written to mark the March 1 "Nicaraguan Day of the Journalist," mentions the call on Europeans to pressure the U.S. to return to Manzanillo talks, but points out that these talks are far less important than internal Nicaraguan dialogue; the letter notes lack of press freedoms in Nicaragua, and calls on European leaders to pressure the Nicaraguan Government for an immediate "sincere dialogue" among all Nicaraguans, and a return to freedom of expression.

Enclosures:
As stated.



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HONDURAN NEWSPAPER COLUMNIST
DEFENDS FREEDOM FIGHTERS

Orlando Henriquez, who writes a thrice-weekly opinion piece for moderate La Tribuna (a Honduran newspaper), defended the Nicaraguan rebels in a column entitled "Contras." Following are excerpts from a translation of the article:

[In] the problem of the "disappeared ones"...the contras have been accused as the only guilty parties....

This is a campaign directed against Nicaraguan patriots who defend democracy with guns in their hands, who bathe Nicaraguan soil with their blood and, by so doing, prevent violence from taking root among us. This campaign is highly damaging and tends to help the Sandinistas paint the contras as criminals and not as freedom fighters in their homeland. It is free propaganda for the communists that serves to create a dangerous climate of hostility against those who oppose the Sandinistas. If this propaganda takes hold here, Honduras will become their adversary rather than remain their friend.

Those Nicaraguans who fight to revive democracy in their country, who are offering their blood in their own territory, who sound the thunder of the weapons of freedom in order to silence the communist dictatorship in the land of Dario, should be admired by the Hondurans and not branded as criminals. We ought to offer them every type of service so that their struggle triumphs. We ought to be their allies and help them in their sacred cause, a cause that seeks to make normal in Nicaragua the right to liberty and free elections. Because only with these rights will tyranny perish and Nicaragua return to the fold of the free nations of America.

We are compelled to recognize that if it were not for the contras, Honduras would be involved in a horribly destructive armed struggle within its own borders, the same as El Salvador. Nicaragua would not have lost time and those thousands of Hondurans who were trained there would have fomented war and disorder here. All the concern that the fall of Somoza caused, and that produced the flight of citizens and money to safer areas, would have been seen as justified with the birth of a guerrilla movement. The contras have served as a buffer and prevented Sandinista aggression. Their existence, their fighting spirit, and their patriotic self-denial indirectly favor us. It favors us because the Nicaraguan communists are involved in their own defense and cannot devote their efforts to creating subversion among the Hondurans.

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Hondurans should look with favor upon the contras. They fight to achieve the real freedom that we have. They need our help, both from our government and from our people, and we are obliged to contribute to the rescue of democracy with all that we have. This should not embarrass us; rather, it ought to fill us with pride because, by so doing, we become defenders of a freedom we do not want to lose and that we want to see in all of Central America.

While in El Salvador the guns sound and in Nicaragua the people suffer oppression, we live in the disorder we love, thanks to the contras who detain aggression against us. While in Nicaragua the cannons boom, here we dream that war will never come.

Let us help the contras. Let us remember that, in the Nicaraguan mountains, the painful cries and the spent blood are the democratic holocaust. We have no right to become mere spectators; we have no right to forget our friends.

NICARAGUA AND THE FAILURE OF THE MARXIST DREAM

In its lead editorial for February 12, 1985, "The Impossible Revolution," Costa Rica's La Nacion points out that the increasing political and economic problems Nicaragua is experiencing are its own fault, in large part for trying to follow the historical blind alley of Marxism. Excerpts follow:

The war the Managua regime has to confront, together with its economic problems, have come about precisely because the Sandinistas keep trying to turn Nicaragua into another Cuba, in spite of the insuperable obstacles in their path... not even the Russians in 1921 could try a similiar experiment without putting the entire Russian society at grave risk. The Bolsheviks found themselves obliged to change their tactics against farmers so that the entire country did not die of hunger.

Nicaragua is an underdeveloped country set in a backward region that forms part of the sphere of influence of the U.S.; it is surrounded by governments whose political principles, customs, and cultural values are completely alien to Marxism. Located in the back yard of the U.S., and moreover in a very strategic position, given its proximity to the Panama Canal, the mere idea of establishing a Marxist-Leninist regime in Nicaragua, even over the long run, strikes one as the maddest idea in the world...

The "infernal" crisis afflicting Nicaragua now is not the result of the caprices of the U.S. Government, but the fatal consequence--which was always foreseeable--of a political madness that only the tropical imagination of a fidel Castro could have conceived. The economy of the country is sinking under a load of inflation, shortages, devaluation and foreign debt, and the only option the government has is to inflict misery on its people and subject them to military despotism.

The regime will never get out of this crisis with the economic measures it is decreeing....The problem is political, not economic. As long as it keeps trying to install a Soviet-style regime, Nicaragua will not be able to do anything more than sink a little deeper every day into the hell of a total crisis, with consequences that are easily foreseeable.

NICARAGUA: A PEOPLE BETRAYED BY EVERYONE

On February 14, 1985, Costa Rica's La Republica decried the abandonment of the Nicaraguan people by all those who should be helping them. "Nicaragua: A People Betrayed by Everyone" notes that most nations of Europe and the Western Hemisphere sympathized with the revolution against Somoza, and in some cases offered concrete help. Western attention to Nicaraguan suffering, says the article, waned after the overthrow. Excerpts from the article follow:

The communist group that participated in the war against Somoza ended by taking over the revolution....They betrayed the revolution, but those who supported the campaign against Somoza did nothing to make the Sandinistas live up to the original aims of the revolution.

The nations that put themselves in the position of guarantors of a democratic revolution cannot escape some of the blame for what is happening in Nicaragua today....

With Nicaragua, the same thing is happening that is happening in Afghanistan. The democratic countries are appalled by what is going on, but they confine themselves to being appalled, not wanting anyone to say that they are working in the interests of the United States, without understanding that with the U.S. or without it, a large part of the Nicaraguan people would continue to fight for its freedom, as it did against Somoza.

If in Nicaragua there were no persecution of the Catholic Church; if political space had been permitted the Coordinadora Democratica; if the Cubans had not established a repressive organization on every block; if the jails were not full of political prisoners; if genuine leaders were allowed to speak to the people without being censored; if there were no massacres of the Miskito Indians, the war would not be taking place in Nicaragua.

More important, the guarantor nations would have maintained their word of honor as backers of a democratic process.

JOURNALISTS' ASSOCIATION SENDS LETTER TO EUROPEAN LEADERS

The Nicaraguan Journalists' Association (APN), an independent journalists' group generally opposed to the Sandinista Government, has publicly issued a letter addressed to Spanish President Felipe Gonzalez, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, and French President Francois Mitterrand noting the recent visit to their three countries and Ireland by Nicaraguan Vice President Sergio Ramirez. The APN letter mentions the call on Europeans to pressure the U.S. to return to Manzanillo talks, but points out that Manzanillo talks are far less important than internal Nicaraguan dialogue. The letter notes lack of press freedom in Nicaragua, and calls on European leaders to pressure the Government of Nicaragua for an immediate "sincere dialogue" among all Nicaraguans, and a return to freedom of expression.

The letter was written to mark the March 1, 1985, "Nicaraguan Day of the Journalist." Following is an informal translation of the letter:

Managua, February 15, 1985
Mr. Felipe Gonzalez
President of the Spanish
Government
Madrid, Spain

Mrs. Margaret Thatcher
Prime Minister of England
London, England

Mr. Francois Mitterrand
President of the French
Government
Paris, France

Your Excellencies:

Allow us, in the name of the people of Nicaragua, to thank you for your efforts to have the Government of the United States resume the dialogue in Manzanillo, Mexico, with the Government of our Country.

We are aware that we can only achieve the hoped for peace through a dialogue that will make the war effort useless. But still more important than the Manzanillo dialogue is the internal dialogue here, among us, the Nicaraguans, and open to the people, for which purpose the full exercise of freedom of expression is essential. A truly patriotic dialogue, sustained by a spirit of sincerity that will lead us to democracy and freedom, as desired and achieved by the peoples of Spain, England, France, Costa Rica, Venezuela, the United States, and other peoples, that in our Hispanic America are going toward the achievement of freedom, not as a utopian but as a living reality, necessary and not postponable.

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In this city of Managua, twenty-two radio news shows were closed on 15 March 1982, depriving of the right of earning a living a hundred families, including journalists and technical support personnel. It is true that later on, in an arbitrary fashion and without the use of any criteria but the acceptance of political information guidelines set forth by DAP--Direction of Agitation and Political Propaganda--of the Sandinista Front, the return to the air of six radio news programs was allowed. In addition, the State's official broadcasts, excluding those that were not considered "consistent" with the development of the totalitarian line that the FSLN is pushing, estranging itself from the original government program of national reconstruction, that was endorsed by the Organization of American States and by all the democratic governments that helped in the overthrow of the genocidal Somoza dictatorship. Today, we regret that the medicine has turned out to be more harmful than the sickness.

The radio news programs that were shut down were the ones that in the time of the dictatorship oriented public opinion, that answered with real patriotic fervor at the time of the national insurrection. Some of the directors and journalists of these media opted for involuntary exile (together with their families) when the sacred right to work was denied to them in their native land, besides being persecuted and harassed. We can mention, among others, Oscar Leonardo Montalvan, Fabio Gadea Mantilla, Orion Elpidio Pastora, Francisco Carranza Chamorro, Paul Arana Selva, Guillermo Terminio, Jose Davila and Mario Alfaro Alvarado.

Nevertheless, we remain here in Nicaragua--the remnant of journalists, directors, and technical personnel, who have vainly demanded of the Sandinista Government the restitution of our rights and freedom. We ask to be left to inform to others our orientation about all those happenings that concern all our people, and about which they have the right to be informed and to give an opinion freely. In summary, most excellent sirs, we request that you sue your good offices before our government so that:

A) there is an immediate call to a sincere dialogue with all Nicaraguans without anybody being left out and

B) that freedom of expression be restored to us immediately in order to direct with legitimate pluralism the unpostponable reconciliation of the Nicaraguan family that will immediately lead to peace for the convulsed and martyred Central American region.

We expect of your excellencies a humanitarian effort before the President Daniel Ortega, that we are sure will carry all the moral force of the sincere and proved friendship and support of your Governments to the noble people of Nicaragua.

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We are enabled to address you in that on the first of March, we will celebrate in Nicaragua National Journalists' Day, a date that we hope will be memorable this time, thanks to the good efforts of friends who defend freedom and democracy, as you have proved to the world. Gratefully we remain of your excellencies,

Pablo Antonio Cuadra, President
Francisco Rivas Quijano, Treasurer
Cesar Vivas Rojas, Secretary RR. II
Roger Leon Carranza, Fiscal
Julio C. Armas G., Executive Secretary